United Nations S/PV.4049

Security Council

Fifty-fourth Year

Provisional

4049th Meeting

Wednesday, 29 September 1999, 11 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Kok	(Netherlands)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Petrella
	Bahrain	Mr. Al-Dosari
	Brazil	Mr. Fonseca
	Canada	Mr. Axworthy
	China	Mr. Qin Huasun
	France	Mr. Dejammet
	Gabon	Mr. Ping
	Gambia	Mr. Jobe
	Malaysia	Mr. Kamal
	Namibia	Mr. Andjaba
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Slovenia	Mr. Türk
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Hain
	United States of America	Mr. Holbrooke

Agenda

The situation in Africa

Progress report on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (S/1999/1008)

99-85950 (E)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

The meeting was called to order at 11.20 a.m.

Representation by and welcome to Foreign Ministers

The President: At the outset of the meeting, I should like to acknowledge the presence at the Council table of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Canada, Gabon and the Gambia, and of the Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom. I should also like to acknowledge and welcome the presence of other Ministers in the Council Chamber today. Their presence is an affirmation of the importance of the subject matter to be addressed.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Africa

Progress report on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (S/1999/1008)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Algeria, Australia, Belgium, Cuba, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Finland, India, Indonesia, Japan, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malawi, Morocco, Mozambique, Norway, the Philippines, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Rwanda, Senegal, Slovakia, South Africa, the Sudan, Swaziland, Togo, Ukraine, the United Arab Emirates, the United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Yemen and Zambia, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Baali (Algeria), Mr. Downer (Australia), Mr. Adam (Belgium), Mr. Rodríguez Parrilla (Cuba), Mr. Ndombasi (Democratic Republic of the Congo), Mr. Olhaye (Djibouti), Mr. Aboul Gheit (Egypt), Ms. Korpi (Finland), Ms. Raje (India), Mr. Wibisono (Indonesia), Mr. Takasu (Japan), Mr. Dorda (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), Mr. Mpinganjira (Malawi), Mr. Snoussi (Morocco), Mr. Simão (Mozambique), Ms. Johnson (Norway), Mr. Siazon (Philippines), Mr. Gama (Portugal), Mr. Lee See-young (Republic of Korea), Mr. Iyamuremye (Rwanda), Mr. Baudin (Senegal), Mr. Chlebo (Slovakia), Mr. Kumalo (South Africa), Mr. Ismail (Sudan), Mr. Dlamini (Swaziland), Mr. Koffigoh (Togo), Mr. Tarasyuk (Ukraine), Mr. Samhan (United Arab Emirates), Mr. Kikwete (United Republic of Tanzania), Mr. Pérez-Otermin (Uruguay), Mr. Ba-Jammal (Yemen) and Mr. Kasanda (Zambia) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

Invitation to Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I invite His Excellency Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity, to take a seat at the Council table.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity, took a seat at the Council table.

The President: I propose that we adjourn this meeting at 1.15 p.m. and resume at 3.15 p.m. This afternoon's meeting will be adjourned at 6.15 p.m. Since we shall probably still have a considerable number of speakers left at that time, I propose to resume our debates tomorrow morning at 10 a.m. sharp. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that this programme is agreed.

It is so decided.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/1999/1008, which contains the progress report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa.

I call on the Secretary-General of the United Nations, His Excellency Mr. Kofi Annan.

The Secretary-General: Nearly a year and a half ago I submitted to the Security Council a report on one of the most pressing challenges of our times: how to achieve durable peace and sustainable development in Africa.

I have been encouraged by the lively response to the report, within and outside the United Nations system. The Security Council established a Working Group to review the report's peace and security aspects and has adopted a number of significant resolutions and statements. The General Assembly, too, has established a Working Group to monitor implementation of the report's recommendations. Research and academic institutions, civil society groups and individuals have joined the debate. But, then, a shortage of proposals and ideas has never been the problem. The need is for real results that bring positive change into people's lives.

My follow-up report is in the Council's hands. Today I would like to offer some general observations, in the hope of assisting the Council as it considers the new report and grapples with the crucial question of what more the Council can do to enhance peace and security in the African region.

As befits a continent of such great human, cultural and natural diversity, a snapshot of Africa on the eve of the new millennium reveals a combination of accomplishments and unresolved problems, of opportunities seized and chances missed. There are places where the Governments and rebel groups persist in spending money on weapons they can ill afford for wars they should not fight. There are places where whole economies have come to depend on the perpetuation of war; where political power has been attained by violent, undemocratic means; where poor governance deprives people of basic needs; where silence about AIDS exacerbates the epidemic; where corruption thwarts economic growth; and where crushing debt burdens, trade barriers and declining international aid make it extremely hard for African nations to attract investment and stave off marginalization from the global economy.

There are, in short, places where the widely held view of Africa as a region in perpetual crisis is not just an image, but an all-too-grim and painful reality. But there are also places — more than is commonly recognized — where we are witnessing dramatic changes for the better.

Many African nations are liberalizing trade and exchange controls, privatizing moribund State industries, building up communications infrastructures and reforming their legal and regulatory frameworks. Africa possesses land and labour resources that foreign investors find attractive. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) recently published a study showing that investment in Africa brings a higher return to American and Japanese companies than any other region of the world.

Africans are also taking charge of their political fortunes, and they are willing to acknowledge past mistakes. A majority of Africans now live under democratic systems. South Africa has just seen its second peaceful and democratic presidential election, and Mozambique will have its second presidential poll next month. The return to civilian rule in Nigeria has transformed that nation's prospects. Both Liberia and Mali have recently carried out the large-scale destruction of small arms. Algeria is taking important steps to move away from the civil strife that has paralysed its development and caused so much suffering.

And at this year's Organization of African Unity (OAU) summit in Algiers, Africa's leaders insisted — in a welcome change from an earlier era — on the principle that Governments which came to power through unconstitutional means could no longer expect to be received as equals in an assembly of elected heads of State. I am sure that the day will come when the General Assembly of the United Nations will follow Africa's lead, and apply similarly stringent standards to all its members.

But until Africa gets a handle on its conflicts such progress will remain tenuous, even in nations far from the fighting. Few African countries can match Angola's natural wealth, or, sadly, the poverty of its war-weary people. Yet the parties there persist in fighting long past the time when either should be placing faith in a military solution.

The people of the Sudan have also suffered far too much and far too long, yet there are few signs that their ordeal will end any time soon. Ethiopia and Eritrea have allowed their new enmities to shatter what had been a very promising break with the past. We must ensure access for humanitarian relief to victims of all these crises. But this is no substitute for the political and military engagement, both African and international, needed to bring stability and to address the root causes of these upheavals.

Sierra Leone provides an important example of Africans taking the lead in conflict resolution. The Economic Community of West African States sent peacekeepers to Sierra Leone and patiently brokered the Lomé Agreement bringing an end to the conflict there. The agreement is far from perfect, but it responds to the real desire for peace in that country and gives it a new lease of life following some of the most stark and brutal human rights violations the world has seen in recent years.

Another successful, albeit fragile, African-led mediation effort has resulted in the signing of the Lusaka peace agreement for the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Last week, President Chiluba of Zambia provided the Security Council with a comprehensive briefing on that effort, which he carried out on behalf of the States of the Southern African Development Community.

The parties to both of those agreements must now live up to their commitments. The United Nations facilitated this diplomatic work. Last week, I proposed to the Council the deployment of an up-to-6,000-strong peacekeeping operation to Sierra Leone. With the initial deployment of liaison officers to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, I am now studying further steps that could be taken to encourage peace in that country.

I should also like to mention the situation in Somalia. In my report to the Council last month, I stated that, as a country without a central government, Somalia remained unique. Yet anarchy does not reign in much of Somalia. There are areas where the absence of law and order has attracted criminals and subversives. A United Nations Children's Fund doctor was murdered recently, and humanitarian agencies temporarily suspended their operations. But there are also areas where ordinary Somalis, tired of warlords and of the violence they breed, are seeking reconciliation. Regions of relative stability and coherent leadership are emerging in the north-west and the north-east.

The international community is beginning to acknowledge these gains. Indeed, they are examples for other regions to follow, and if carefully nurtured they could lead to broader national reconciliation.

Members of the Council will not be surprised to hear me say that many Africans, remembering the failure to intervene effectively in Rwanda to stop the genocide, at times regard the Security Council as indifferent to the continent's plight. They are closely watching the Council's deliberations on the Democratic Republic of the Congo and on Sierra Leone.

In recent weeks, Africans have seen the Council approve a far-reaching operation for Kosovo and respond to the violence in East Timor. They have listened while many world leaders, as well as myself, have welcomed, albeit cautiously, an evolving understanding of sovereignty that allows the international community to intervene more readily to halt massive and systematic violations of human rights.

As members move closer to a decision on these situations, I hope they will also keep the broadest possible picture in view. Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of the Congo need more than humanitarian palliatives. Each crisis situation in the world is different and must be decided on its own merits. But for the United Nations and this Council in particular to retain their credibility and the support of the world's peoples, the commitment to peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance and other such action must be applied fairly and consistently, irrespective of region or nation.

Whether we are speaking of peace and security issues or of closely related questions such as social development, environmental protection, human rights and human resources, it is essential to think in terms of partnerships with Africa: partnerships with the OAU, with other regional and subregional organizations, with civil society groups and individuals.

Those nations making good-faith efforts and adopting enlightened policies deserve much greater support than they are now getting. Where the international community is committed to making a difference, it has shown that significant transformation can be achieved.

There is no excuse for not doing what is reasonable and doable. It is reasonable, for example, to provide more resources for humanitarian assistance and post-conflict peace-building. It is reasonable to act more rapidly and more decisively on debt. It is reasonable to increase official development assistance.

But what is reasonable and doable is far from a question of money alone. Training, technology, political engagement: there are many paths for partnership to follow. The over-arching point is that, by combining African efforts with those of the international community,

we can give the cause of peace and development in Africa decisive new momentum.

"Afro-pessimism" is a dead end. "Africa fatigue" is an affront to the very idea of a responsible international community. I said in my report last year that our work in Africa was both a process and a shared partnership. However imperfectly, Africans have provided many important signs of their own yearning for peace, stability and development and of their willingness to work for it. The right kind of support now, carefully directed to those best able to use it, could help Africans turn a corner and set the stage for a brighter future. Let us seize this moment.

The President: I call now on the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity, His Excellency Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim.

Mr. Salim (Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity): I wish first of all to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of September, and to say how honoured I am to address the Security Council once again on behalf of the Organization of African Unity (OAU). The initiative you have taken to convene this ministerial meeting on the situation in Africa, on the eve of the year 2000, is a welcome initiative and clear testimony to the continuing interest of the Netherlands in Africa. I would also like to express the appreciation of the OAU for the support that your country, the Netherlands, has been extending and continues to extend to Africa, particularly in the areas of economic development and in our efforts at promoting peace, security and stability in our continent.

This initiative happily coincides with the momentous decisions taken by African leaders themselves at the Algiers summit in July this year and subsequently at the summit held in Sirte, Libya, in September, aimed at strengthening Africa's capacity to deal with continental and global challenges. These decisions relate, *inter alia*, to Africa's resolve and its determined effort to make the year 2000 a year of peace and stability in our continent.

Our objective and our determination is to move from an era of conflict resolution to an era of security and stability, and from an era of economic stagnation to one of greater integration of African economies and of economic development. In so doing, we shall start the process of putting an end to the current plethora of conflicts that continue to frustrate Africa's aspirations and expectations, and of creating better conditions for the well-being of African peoples.

I see the present session as a follow-up: first, to the Ministerial meeting of the Security Council on 25 September 1997 (S/PV.3819), which discussed the situation in Africa and, second, to the discussions last year of the Secretary-General's report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (S/1998/318). This present initiative therefore constitutes a manifestation of the international community's continuing interest in Africa and its concern over the conflicts which continue to cause immense suffering for our people and destruction of life and property, apart from its serious negative impact on the socio-economic development of our continent.

Two years ago, when I addressed the Ministerial meeting of the Security Council on the situation in Africa I drew the Council's attention to the many problems facing that continent and the challenges they posed — and continue to pose — for our peoples and leaders. The issues of democratization, good governance, accountability, respect for human rights and the rule of law continue to preoccupy African governments and peoples. The very healthy and frank discussions that took place in Algiers on these issues and in particular the decision, effective from the next summit, not to accept those who usurp power through the overthrow of constitutionally elected governments in OAU, bear witness to Africa's resolve and seriousness on these issues.

As we revisit the situation in Africa since the time of our last debate on this subject, I should like to pay a well-deserved tribute to the Secretary-General of the United Nations for his insightful progress report before us today. We note, in that regard, the important role of the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, particularly their holistic approach in the implementation of the important recommendations in the report.

We at OAU also attach great importance to enhanced cooperation between OAU and the United Nations, convinced as we are that the partnership between the two institutions is mutually reinforcing.

Since the last Ministerial meeting on the situation in Africa, there have been significant developments in our continued and collective efforts for the peaceful

resolution of the conflicts there. The signing of the Agreement on a Ceasefire in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (S/1999/815) and the Lomé Peace Agreement (S/1999/777) on the peace process in Sierra Leone are especially noteworthy. In this regard, we welcome the recent proposal of the United Nations Secretary-General for the deployment of a 6,000-strong United Nations force for Sierra Leone and the positive reaction to it by the Security Council contained in the resolution currently under consideration. We believe that sending such a force will help stabilize the situation and assist in the implementation of the Lomé Peace Agreement. It is also proper to emphasize here the urgent need to provide the Government and people of Sierra Leone with humanitarian assistance as well as assistance for rehabilitation and reconstruction.

As we meet today, a number of conflicts remain a source of grave concern to us: in Angola; in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; and between Ethiopia and Eritrea. We are concerned also by the crisis in the Comoros, the fragile and fluid situation in the Republic of the Congo and the situation in Burundi. In almost all these conflicts, it is significant that it has been mainly Africans themselves who have been in the forefront in finding solutions.

In the tragic and unfortunate conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea, Africa — through its continental organization — has been seriously and deeply engaged in finding a peaceful settlement. These efforts were carried out by the High-Level Delegation of heads of State and Government comprising the then Chairman of OAU, President Blaise Compaore of Burkina Faso, President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe and former President Hassan Gouled Aptidon of Djibouti, as well as the new head of State of that country, President Ismail Omar Guelleh, together with the OAU Secretary-General. These efforts continue to be pursued today by OAU and more particularly by the current Chairman of OAU, President Abdelaziz Bouteflika of Algeria, working closely with the Secretary-General of OAU. Since the Algiers summit in July this year, intensive consultations have been pursued with a view to seeking an early solution to the conflict. OAU has continued these efforts in close cooperation with the United Nations and the Government of the United States of America.

In the case of Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau, it has again been Africa, more particularly the heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), which has worked assiduously towards the restoration of peace and the restoration of constitutional order. Currently, Africa is engaged in yet another effort to advance the cause of peace in Burundi, under the auspices of the former President of Tanzania, Mwalimu Julius Nyerere. Within the context of the letter and spirit of the Algiers summit, we are determined to do our utmost to promote efforts to put an end to the bloody death and destruction taking place in Angola essentially as a result of the intransigence of the UNITA leadership. We also hope to intensify efforts to resolve the conflicts in Somalia and southern Sudan.

The situation in the Comoros also continues to be of serious concern. We have spared no effort in our common resolve to restore peace, security and constitutional order to the archipelago. OAU and the countries of the region have explored all peaceful avenues for a lasting solution to the crisis in that country. It was under OAU auspices that the Addis Ababa and Antananarivo Agreements were fostered. Regrettably, the Antananarivo Agreement — which was welcomed by all people of goodwill as a serious attempt to address the concerns of all the inhabitants of the Comoros, particularly on the island of Anjouan, while maintaining the unity and territorial integrity of the country and the cohesion of its people — was undermined by the intransigence of hard-line elements within the Anjouanese party. Furthermore, the military takeover in the Comoros has further complicated the situation.

I wish to stress at this point that in all its peace endeavours OAU has never found the United Nations unwilling to help. Indeed, the United Nations has proved to be our main partner for peace. I wish, therefore, to take this opportunity to pay a tribute to the United Nations, its Security Council and its Secretary-General for their support and cooperation. Our appreciation also goes to individual States Members of the United Nations which are accompanying and supporting OAU in its efforts to promote peace, security and stability in Africa. I wish also to emphasize that OAU has endeavoured to work closely with and to support the regional economic communities in their collective efforts to resolve conflicts there. OAU takes pride in the partnership we have succeeded in building with the United Nations and the regional economic communities in Africa, and we definitely look forward to strengthening and consolidating this partnership for peace, particularly as we prepare to enter the new century.

I wish to take this opportunity also to stress the importance of timely action by the international

community, the United Nations and its Security Council, in particular, to support peace agreements promoted by OAU or by the regional economic communities in cooperation with OAU. In saying this, I have in mind our experience in the past when critical time and opportunities for peace were lost because of a lack of timely action by the Council.

The sad experience of United Nations inaction with respect to the situation in the Republic of the Congo is still very fresh in our mind. There is no doubt that the signing of a peace agreement, even though significant by itself, is but the beginning of a long and arduous path to peace, strewn with dangers and alive with the potential for a renewal of conflict if the components for a successful peacemaking and peacekeeping process are not adequate, timely and appropriate.

As we meet today, I must point out that serious difficulties have been faced by OAU and the regional economic communities — ECOWAS and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) — involved in the implementation of the Agreements for Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. These Agreements have been duly signed by the parties concerned and what is required is speedy action for their implementation. Yet the required determination and resources are not forthcoming: it is a fact that we lack the necessary and adequate resources to ensure the full and successful implementation of the Agreements which have so far been signed much less those yet to be agreed by the parties to these conflicts.

I have already expressed our full support for some of the proposals made by the Secretary-General in his recent report on the situation in Sierra Leone, proposals aimed at enhancing United Nations support for the implementation of the Lomé Peace Agreement. I would now like to urge the Security Council to also take speedy action with respect to the implementation of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement through the deployment of a peacekeeping force. I wish to reiterate the call made by President Chiluba of Zambia in his Council briefing on the Democratic Republic of the Congo on 21 September and to appeal once again to this body to ensure that Africa is provided with the much-needed financial and logistical assistance for the successful implementation of the Agreement signed. Such early action by the Security Council is vital in view of the fragile peace prevailing in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I believe that such determined action by the Security Council is also consistent with its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

In pleading for speedy action by the Security Council, I emphasize the partnership for peace that I mentioned earlier and that we are seeking to consolidate between our universal body, our continental organization and our regional economic communities. This partnership needs to be based on a rational division of work and fair sharing of the burden, bearing in mind the global responsibility entrusted to the United Nations and its Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security.

As the Council deliberates on the situation in Africa, I am confident that it will take into account the realities in our continent and the steadfast efforts of African countries in dealing with their problems as well as events that impinge on the continent from outside.

The Abuja Treaty broke new ground in Africa's strategies for the greater integration of the economies of its States. But in order for Africa to embark on this vital course of integration it should be given a chance to assert itself in this direction. As indicated by the numerous appeals made by African leaders — not only at the fifty-fourth session of the General Assembly, on the eve of the new millennium, but also at other forums — the cancellation of debt in respect of African countries has become all the more urgent. Likewise, in the very progress report before us today, the Secretary-General has argued that, despite the many pitfalls and impediments on the continent, African countries have already embarked on the much-required economic reforms.

Recently in Sirte, Libya, African leaders, among other things, also decided to establish an African Union in conformity with the ultimate objectives of the Charter of our continental organization and the provisions of the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community; accelerate the process of implementing the Treaty; and strengthen and consolidate the regional economic communities as the pillars for achieving the objectives of the African Economic Community to realize the envisaged Union.

I am sure the Council members now realize that African countries are clearly not shying away from their responsibilities. While we recognize that some of our problems are part of colonial legacies and injustices done to our people, at the same time we remain mindful that many of our problems are of our own making.

We believe that these serious and imaginative efforts deployed by our people and our leaders in confronting many of our problems and challenges deserve international understanding and solidarity. We need an element of fairness and objectivity in reviewing African problems.

Africa, for example, has the misfortune of having some 7 million refugees and more than double that number of internally displaced persons. In their generosity, African countries have provided shelter and support. Yet for Africans to be able to assist effectively their brethren who have been forced to vote with their feet, international support and solidarity — which unfortunately, have been diminishing — are vital.

I need not remind Council that in dealing with African refugees, as compared to some others in other parts of the world, the element of proportionality is lacking.

As I conclude, I would like to reiterate that Africa is undertaking a process of reform and renewal. This process is all-embracing — political, economic and social — and is, in my view, an irreversible process. But for the process to remain meaningful and sustainable, Africa needs the active support of the international community. As we prepare to enter a new century, and believing, as I believe all the Council members do, in our collective humanity, I trust that the Council and the international community at large will respond positively and constructively to Africa's own quiet revolution.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity for the kind words he addressed to my Government.

The next speaker is the representative of Algeria, who wishes to make a statement on behalf of the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Baali (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): It is indeed a pleasant duty to submit to you, Sir, on my own behalf and on behalf of the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), Mr. Abdelaziz Bouteflika, whom I have the honour of representing here, my heartfelt congratulations on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council.

The convincing results that this body has achieved under the direction of Ambassador Peter van Walsum promise to make this debate on Africa, organized at the initiative of your country, a great success.

I would like to pay a well-deserved tribute to your predecessor, Ambassador Martin Andjaba of Namibia, for the elegance and competence he showed in leading the work of the Council during a month when the world continued — the summer season notwithstanding — to be rocked by crises, tensions and armed conflicts.

I would also like to welcome the presence here among us of several Ministers for Foreign Affairs from Africa and other friendly countries. Their presence attests to the importance that the international community attaches to Africa and its recovery.

I would like, finally, to express our great joy at seeing Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, Secretary-General of the OAU, taking part in this debate and having him share with us his sound knowledge and consummate experience of African affairs.

Two years ago the Security Council met at the ministerial level to consider the possibility of international action to promote peace and security on the African continent. In so doing, the Council assessed for the first time the scope of the challenges facing Africa. At the same time, the Council showed its readiness to assist in the struggle for peace and development on that continent, which has been able to rid itself of colonialism but not to rid itself entirely of the weight of colonialism's heritage. This heritage is quite often the source of conflicts that tear the continent apart and of the poverty with which it is afflicted.

Since then, the Secretary-General of our organization, who has just presented to us a useful and exhaustive report, has endeavoured, with his well-known courage and tenacity, to gradually make Africa the focus of United Nations concerns. His statement here before the Council this morning is just another striking illustration of this. But it is from Africa itself that the most powerful message of hope has come.

Realizing that its salvation depended first and foremost on its own efforts, Africa has, with unexpected vigour and vitality, undertaken to get back on its feet. To fully accomplish this, however, it needs the support of the international community, and especially of the United Nations, which Africa has greatly helped live up to its original ideals. Indeed, in emerging on the scene of history, African countries have been responsible for

priority being given by the United Nations to the major redemptive projects that go by the names of decolonization, development, disarmament and democratization.

In establishing the OAU as a crucible for their solidarity and a channel of their aspirations, the African countries were able to preserve their independence in the face of the demands of the prevailing bipolar structure of international relations and, further, to find in the principles of non-alignment the tools for unity of action to ensure for themselves a significant say in the course of events within the United Nations, which had become the object of great hopes.

Since then, the OAU has belied speculation on its obsolescence and defied the challenges posed by internal problems and external interference. The OAU thus developed a faithful partnership with the United Nations in its quest for peace and development, implementing a doctrine whose soundness was amply confirmed by its hard-won aloofness from the East-West confrontation and by its emphasis on the North-South gap, which it had constantly warned against.

The remarkable developments in the course of history, with the victory of Africa and the United Nations over colonialism and apartheid and the disappearance of ideological confrontation in international relations, have established conditions propitious for work on economic and social development and for the building of democratic political systems.

But the legacy of the twentieth century is as heavy as it is uncertain. Considerable, swift and inadequately controlled changes have exposed the restructuring of international relations to the opposite phenomena of fragmentation and globalization. The asymmetry between Africa and the developed world has become structural in relation both to the problems of peace, security and stability and to economic development and integration. Africa continues to suffer from a chronic deterioration in the terms of trade, the external debt burden, heavy unemployment and the effects of pandemics, as well as the many torments brought on by human and natural evils.

It is a tragic demonstration of Africa's isolation from the rest of the world that our continent is the only region where education is declining at a time when the developed countries are moving at full speed into the information age and waging a technological revolution that is having an unimaginably positive impact on the quality of life in their societies. Indeed, our continent is home to two thirds of the least developed countries and to three quarters of those at a low level of human development, and almost half of its inhabitants live in absolute poverty.

With a continually declining level of official development assistance; a suffocating debt burden; a still meagre flow of direct foreign investment; a heavy dependence on, and thus a significant vulnerability with regard to the commodities that are often its sole exports; an insignificant level of participation in world trade; and among the lowest social development indicators, Africa today is a continent afflicted by serious handicaps that further hinder the development efforts it has made to recover from the most unfavourable and adverse conditions. In brief, Africa, striving and sacrificing to reform itself and thus take its place in the management of world affairs, is unjustly penalized and blocked in its efforts to recover.

Nevertheless, in spite of the picture of suffering and contrasts which the continent presents to the world; in spite of the upheavals that wrack its civil societies; and in spite of all the difficulties draining its capacity to steer its own way through a troublesome environment, Africa has taken the costly and demanding road of renewal that is so necessary if it is to assume control of its own destiny and to achieve a balanced world situation in the future.

This year, the OAU heads of State and Government, meeting in Algiers, participated in unprecedented numbers to make their thirty-fifth annual Summit a particularly outstanding event. The Summit was also a milestone in the fruition of major changes deeply affecting Africa, which has come to learn that its renewal calls inescapably for the satisfaction of the demands of democratization and good governance, the promotion of social justice and free economic enterprise, and the protection of all human and national rights.

The Algiers Summit proved that all Africa has met, assembled and set off, with a sense of responsibility and realism, down the road to peace, unity and work — in a word, to recovery. A new spirit calling for concord and peace prevails from the North of our continent to the South. Aware that only a peaceful, stable and unitary Africa can hope to meet the challenge of recovery, African leaders decided to strive with renewed vigour to settle the conflicts that have cast their peoples into mourning and wasted their precious resources. They would do so by addressing the underlying causes of these

conflicts and establishing conditions for implementing African solutions informed by African values.

Africa emerged from the Algiers Summit serene, unified and strong. Africa has perceptively drawn lessons from past failures and refined its vision and its quest for future successes. Africa has undertaken to overcome difficult problems within its borders and, beyond, to take its place among the architects and beneficiaries of collective security and globalization. In this regard, the Algiers Declaration, which the thirty-fifth OAU Summit crafted as an expression of Africa's determination and expectations on the threshold of the twenty-first century, illustrates a sound and ambitious concept of the universal partnership for which the African countries are calling in the enlightened self-interest of us all.

In this respect, the Declaration adopted by the heads of State and Government in Sirte laid down new rules for facilitating the evolution of Africa towards the unity which the OAU charter set as its ultimate objective.

Africa has made its major priority the strengthening of its capacity to prevent, manage and eliminate conflict, inspired by the conviction that the loss of human lives and the squandering of resources can never be justified by the false claims and illusory solutions that underlie so many internal and inter-African confrontations. Nevertheless, Africa has resolutely endeavoured to eliminate these counterproductive tensions and to shed the burdens of fratricidal conflicts. To that end, the Algiers Summit, in a very timely manner, worked to consolidate and expand the doctrinal bases for African joint action, both enshrining principles that have well served inter-African relations — such as that of the inviolability of the borders that existed at independence — and rejecting unconstitutional changes in the political life of the States of the continent.

Against this background and in the light of the efforts undertaken and results achieved to date in managing various conflict situations, the Algiers Summit reiterated the validity of the peace plans that the OAU has painstakingly developed in consultation with the parties and supplied operational resources to implement them more speedily.

Whether in the conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia or the situation in the Great Lakes region and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, breakthroughs have been achieved in the search for peaceful, just and lasting solutions. The OAU, in cooperation with the United Nations and with the goodwill which the Organization elicits in its work for peace, will methodically pursue its activities, which will intensify with the involvement of the protagonists, whose active cooperation is indispensable to a positive outcome.

The stabilization of the situation in Liberia and Sierra Leone continues, with the praiseworthy assistance of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) member States, while the good offices of the OAU in the Comoros are gaining ground, as Comorans rally around democratically elected institutions to preserve the country's national unity and territorial integrity.

In Angola, the OAU is firmly at the side of the United Nations, which has quite rightly said that UNITA is solely responsible for the continuation of the crisis. Similarly, in Western Sahara the OAU is sparing no effort to assist the United Nations to organize, in July 2000, the referendum on self-determination for the Sahroui people, in accordance with the peace plan and the Houston agreements, accepted by both parties to the conflict and endorsed by the Security Council.

Africa has thus taken control of its affairs, showing its determination to put an end to conflicts that have weakened it and to free itself to conduct the only battle worth waging, that of development. It has in that way shown everyone that it does not intend to remain a continent that is taken for granted, and that no one should henceforth doubt its capacity to rise again and take its rightful place in the emerging new world order.

At the same time, Africa realizes that peace is a long-term endeavour. It also knows that development is another name for peace, and that as long as there is still poverty and misery the work of peace will remain fragile and the progress realized will be reversible.

Finally, it realizes that the way to eradicate the causes of dissension and instability is to meet the legitimate aspirations of its peoples, especially their aspiration to live in democratic societies, free of injustice and arbitrariness, with the rule of law well established, and with their rights and freedoms respected, in full harmony with their age-old values and heritage.

However, the Algiers summit did not just commit itself to ending the tragic phase of conflict in Africa. It is also intended to be a new point of departure for the continent's economic development and its integration.

The Abuja Agreement, which created the African Economic Community, is now being implemented, based on regional and subregional regroupings whose interaction and cooperation will gradually and in practical ways lead to the final unification of the continent.

When they are completely free of the formidable burdens imposed by inter-State and intra-State conflicts, the African countries, which have been behind those of the other continents, will also be able to devote themselves fully to rebuilding their economies, meeting the enormous needs of their populations and making their contribution to the overall recovery of Africa. Indeed, many of our countries that are committed to ambitious structural adjustment programmes, which are socially costly, are now beginning to see the fruits of their efforts and to renew economic growth.

However, in order to meet the challenge of recovery, Africa, which can be self-reliant, must also be able to count on the international community and its support. Africa generally expects the rest of the world to accept it as a partner equal in rights and duties and a credible and responsible interlocutor — that is, a fully fledged participant in the conduct of international affairs and the restructuring of the world order.

This means that Africa must be an active party in decision-making concerning major international issues which involve the future of humankind, and therefore its own future, be they issues of international peace and security or economic cooperation and development.

From this standpoint, the OAU wishes to establish a sound and fruitful relationship with the United Nations going beyond existing schemes for cooperation and taking the form of a new contract, comprehensive and ambitious, covering all areas of common interest. Together we must think about identifying the various areas where close cooperation between the two Organizations is desirable, if not necessary, and the ways of organizing it, building it and implementing it.

One of the essential areas where obviously the OAU and the United Nations can and must develop a special relationship is that of peacekeeping, where, thanks to its irreplaceable knowledge of African problems and its now well recognized experience in this area, the OAU can help to manage conflicts in cooperation with the United Nations. The United Nations would also, in forms and circumstances to be determined by common agreement, give not only political support, but logistical, financial and training support.

We regard it as essential in this respect that the United Nations commit itself in Africa with the same weight and determination as it has shown in other regions of the world, as regards conflict prevention and settlement, peacekeeping operations or assistance to refugees, since the international community must extend a hand to all those who are suffering and show generosity towards them, whatever region of the world they come from, as suffering knows no colour.

Another area where the OAU and the United Nations must create new forms of cooperation is the humanitarian sphere, a sensitive issue for all. If we are not careful, this could lead to all kinds of excesses. It seems to me essential that the two Organizations together define, in a clear and transparent manner, rules for managing humanitarian issues, so that, on the one hand, humanitarian assistance is not used for political or media purposes, and, on the other hand, is not conceived as an alternative to the prevention or settlement of conflicts or used as a pretext to violate the sovereignty of States or even as a substitute for development assistance.

From this viewpoint, the right or duty to interfere, which some now wish to make an international norm applying everywhere, automatically and in all situations, is a cause of major concern for our countries, because of the risks of interference in the internal affairs of States inherent in it and the unacceptable threats it brings to bear on national sovereignty. It would be particularly dangerous, under the pretext of exorcising painful emotions or absolving the international community of its past inaction or its inability now and in the future to prevent or settle crises, to risk acting without the consent of a State, or even against its desire, with excesses as serious as regrettable endangering the collective security system so painstakingly built around the Security Council.

The final area of importance where the United Nations has a role to play, and responsibilities to assume, with regard to Africa, is that of development, which should be at the heart of the new relationship to be built between the two Organizations.

There are rather contrasting results of the many United Nations initiatives on Africa and the efforts made by some of our partners, particularly through official development assistance, alleviating the debt burden or

opening up markets to African exports. It is therefore important to reformulate the relationship between the OAU and the United Nations on a new basis and to open up the way for the establishment of a genuine partnership for the development of Africa.

In order to succeed, this partnership should take into account, coherently and comprehensively, the issues of investment, official development assistance, external debt, trade and the negative effects of structural adjustment programmes, and it should involve all the financial institutions and agencies of the United Nations in a concerted and coherent effort.

The developments and changes characterizing today's world, which show quite clearly the interdependence among nations and which, paradoxically, also show that Africa is clearly being left on the sidelines, require a partnership of this nature and of this scope. This alone would allay the fears that the international community will go back on its consensus regarding the need for Africa's economic recovery.

Similarly, at a time when world economic models are converging in their orientation to the market and the universal impact of global environmental factors intertwine the objective of lasting sustainable development with that of social development, the international community must be sensitive to the urgent and imperative needs of Africa with regard to the elimination of hunger, the eradication of pandemics, especially AIDS, the alleviation of poverty, the universal immunization of children and basic education for all.

So it is that the objective of collective security of States, associated with the new horizons opened up at the end of the cold war and serious progress towards general and complete disarmament — which should involve first and foremost weapons of mass destruction — will be expressed in the new terms of physical well-being and quality of life for citizens.

Africa, which has declared itself to be a nuclear-weapon-free zone, could serve well as an area for the deployment of efforts to propagate a culture for the security of peoples with the aim of cultivating the civil, political, cultural, social and economic rights of Africans.

The debate on Africa is being held at a time like no other, since it brings us together at the dawning of a new era with so many challenges, promises and opportunities, an era that, if only we wished it, could foster the birth of a new ethic of international relations, based on universally shared peace and prosperity. This new ethic would fully restore the ideals and principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter, while repudiating for ever the upheavals, aberrations and torments of the twentieth century, which has been especially trying for the human race.

Thus, it is important that the substantial results of our Organization provide the impetus for a new beginning, with even greater ambitions in terms of preventive diplomacy, peaceful settlement of disputes among States, the maintenance of peace and international security and international cooperation for development.

It is also important that the acceleration of history, which began to give some substance and consistency to the idea of an "international community", lead to a network of renewed international relations, where the higher interests of humankind be seen as indivisible and encompass the political and security spheres as well as the economic, financial and monetary spheres. It is also important that globalization extend naturally its benefits to the developing countries and not give rise in any way to increased marginalization or exclusion.

From this point of view, Africa has value as a challenging test of credibility for the professions of faith over a future of solidarity that is qualitatively better for all humankind. Africa must no longer be a vast area that is prey to uncertainty, dire poverty, pandemics and disorder. Africa is, in fact, the continent whose recovery requires the greatest external support in order to mobilize all of its energies to the maximum extent. Africa must, of course, count on its own resources, but it is entitled to expect special assistance from the international community as a whole.

This means that now more than ever, the United Nations has a unique mission to carry out and special responsibilities to take on for the benefit of Africa. This also means that the United Nations must resolutely put Africa at the focus of the problem of building a peaceful and harmonious world order for future generations.

Precisely at the end of a century that has seen Africa, the cradle of humankind, go through a revival and a rehabilitation after such a cruel history, Africans are entitled to become active participants in the prodigious promises of the third millennium. This would be the best way to raise over the new era the banner of

promoting respect for the dignity of the human individual and of all human beings.

The President: I thank the representative of Algeria for his kind words addressed to the presidency.

Mr. Holbrooke (United States of America): I am deeply honoured to speak before the Council today on Africa, an area that I have pledged will be one of my highest priorities as the United States Ambassador to the United Nations. I thank Prime Minister Kok for his leadership, and I appreciate all the hard work done by his strong delegation to make this meeting possible. I compliment the Secretary-General on his statement and thank him for all of his efforts on these important issues. His personal leadership — indeed, his personal advice to me — his inspiration in these areas has been enduring, and I look to him for so much in this area.

We also appreciate the statements of the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the representative of the Chair of the OAU. The achievements of the OAU under Secretary-General Salim Salim and the current Chairman in Algeria in promoting peace and stability throughout the region are vital, and we take note of these important efforts.

Because the list of speakers is long and the subject vastly important, and much of what I will say has already been said by previous speakers — and I am sure will be repeated by others — and because the people in this room need less than anyone else in the world to be reminded of the importance of these issues, I would like to summarize my remarks and submit the full remarks in written form in order to enable more speakers to speak before lunch.

Throughout this decade, the United States, under the personal leadership of President Clinton, has worked to revitalize and energize American engagement in Africa. My country is proud to have convened the first Security Council ministerial meeting on Africa two years ago. Last March, Secretary of State Albright hosted the first United States-Africa ministerial meeting, bringing together leaders of 50 African nations to discuss our common agenda. Next month, she plans to make her third visit there as Secretary of State. And, as many here know, because I have discussed my plans in order to seek their advice, I plan to make my first major trip in my present job to Africa in late November or early December.

No longer the victims of colonialism or great-Power competition, the people of Africa have a historic opportunity to see that in the coming century, their lives can be freer, safer and more secure. It is imperative that the United Nations support and foster their ambitions. Towards this end, our efforts should address a four-part agenda: first, we must enhance Africa's security by helping it resolve and prevent armed conflict; secondly, we must help Africa grapple with such transnational threats as AIDS and terrorism; thirdly, we must support Africa's ongoing political transformation towards open societies and markets; and fourthly, we must assist Africa's economic development and address its humanitarian concerns.

Allow me to discuss this agenda in more detail and, once again, summarize much of what I would otherwise have said at greater length.

In Africa we have to work much harder to solve the conflicts that threaten the continent's future. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo — a situation that has involved at least eight countries and become the widest inter-State war in African history — we support the efforts now under way to implement the peace agreement so painstakingly negotiated by President Chiluba of Zambia. We will consider recommendations of United Nations military liaison officers on how the United Nations can further the peace process. We urge all combatants to adhere to the signed ceasefire. And the United Nations, in our view, needs a strong, experienced special representative in the Democratic Republic of the Congo as soon as possible to galvanize peace implementation.

Similarly, in Sierra Leone, the United States has been working actively with the Government, the various rebel groups, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the United Nations to implement a peace agreement. We are anxious to begin disarmament and demobilization in Sierra Leone while the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) still has a credible force in the field. We need the United Nations to deploy the full complement of authorized observers as soon as possible and be ready to introduce a full peacekeeping operation in December when the Nigerians plan to leave.

In Ethiopia and Eritrea, we must continue to work to restore peace. Although both sides have committed themselves to the OAU peace settlement, much work remains to be done. What some consider two of the most hopeful countries in Africa now illustrate the dramatic impact of senseless war.

Our collective failure to prevent and contain such conflicts is lamentable. The international community has a responsibility — moral, humanitarian, strategic and political — to do more. The United States for its part, has started: through the President's African crisis response initiative it is enhancing Africa's own peacekeeping capacity. So far we have trained some 5,000 African peacekeepers from six different countries through this programme. As Secretary Albright explained last week, the United States has developed procedures to halt United States arms sales to regions of conflict not already covered by United Nations arms embargoes. We encourage other nations to establish and observe such moratoriums.

We also believe that we must attack the economic structures that fuel the illicit arms trade — the grey and black markets in diamonds, precious metals and narcotics. Next week, experts in the United States Government will convene a conference to look specifically at the war economies in Angola, the Congo and Sierra Leone. These are just some of the things we must do, but our responsibilities must not obscure a fundamental reality: the people and leaders of Africa must provide a basis for peace.

Let me be clear: where meaningful peace agreements are in place, the United Nations should work hard to implement them. Where an international presence is required, the United Nations has a vital role to play. But we must also press the people and leaders of Africa itself to solve the problems on their own and, above all, to prevent them before they begin or escalate.

In addition to the threat of instability, the United Nations needs to continue to help Africa grapple with those problems that lie outside the traditional realm of international politics. The scourge of diseases like HIV/AIDS stands out. The statistics, as everybody knows, are truly staggering, and again I compliment the Secretary-General on his personal efforts to heighten awareness of this issue over the last few years. President Clinton is currently seeking from Congress an additional $100 million to fight AIDS worldwide. Senator Frist of Tennessee, the Chairman of the subcommittee on African Affairs of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, a Republican and a surgeon, is personally seized of this issue and is working hard and extensively to gain support for it and greater awareness of it in the United States.

Terrorism continues to be a serious transnational threat and one that we must all face together. The United States has been providing anti-terrorism training to law enforcement officers in eight African States.

Our third challenge is one we believe in strongly: Africa must continue to develop open societies and open markets. There can be no doubt that throughout this decade, African democracy has made major — indeed in some areas historic — strides. Today, more Africans live democratically than ever before. Many Africans are tasting freedom for the first time. This is illustrated in such places as Mozambique and Namibia, and I think there was special symbolism, and more than symbolism, in that only nine years after United Nations peacekeepers helped Namibia to independence, Ambassador Martin Adjaba so brilliantly led the Security Council's recent delegation to East Timor and effected a potentially historic breakthrough towards peace.

These are but two examples that should give us all hope. It is for reasons such as these that the United States will continue to be a strong supporter of democratic forces across the continent. We will work extensively with non-governmental organizations to achieve this.

We must continue to work together to address the economic and humanitarian problems that still exist in too many countries in Africa. Clearly, there is an enormous amount of work ahead of us. According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Report 1999, 42 African countries are in the lowest third of the countries ranked; the 22 lowest-ranked countries are all in sub-Saharan Africa. Urban unemployment persists at rates of 20 to 30 per cent. Landmines continue to cause deaths and casualties throughout the continent. And Africa is also home to as many as 3 million refugees and almost 8 million displaced persons. As some representatives here may know, I have spent my entire career working on refugee issues. I intend to visit refugee camps on my forthcoming trip. I know what needs to be done. I will work closely with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and with our able Assistant Secretary of State for Population, Refugees and Migration, Julia Taft, to enhance our efforts in this area.

President Clinton has committed himself to working with Congress to restore United States official development assistance to Africa to the high levels of the past. The Africa Growth and Opportunity Bill, now before the United States Senate, would open United States markets more broadly to African products and give

incentives to countries to reform and modernize their economies.

We have also given our support to demining programmes both through the United Nations and bilaterally.

These efforts assist our work to ease Africa's transition into the global economy. Statism and corruption — legacies of the colonial and immediate post-colonial periods — are hard habits to break, but Africans are working hard to break them. It is incumbent upon all of us to play a role in this process.

We all have an indispensable role to play in helping Africa progress towards peace, prosperity and greater freedom. Strides have been made, but an enormous amount remains to be done. Throughout my tenure as the United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations, I pledge that, along with the United States Government, I will work tirelessly to further the agenda I have just outlined.

The President: I thank the representative of the United States for his kind words addressed to the presidency.

Mr. Axworthy (Canada): I would like to thank the delegation of the Netherlands for convening this meeting on the situation in Africa and to you, personally, Mr. Prime Minister, for adding your presence to this very important debate. I should also like to thank the Secretary-General for his very thoughtful report and the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), and the Ambassador of Algeria representing the Chairman of OAU, President Bouteflika, for their important contributions.

As we have heard in the reports that have just been given here, Africans across the continent are seizing opportunities to build vibrant and stable communities. Democracy is resurgent; civil society is taking hold and prospects for growth are promising. I think it would be fair to say that the African renaissance is under way.

(spoke in French)

Economic and social development are, of course, central to these processes. Canada's commitment to working with African people towards this end remains intact. A third of Canada's official development assistance is allocated to Africa. Canada has forgiven all official development assistance debt for the poorest African countries. This year, we helped forge an international mechanism to expand debt relief for the poorest countries. We have given great priority to the battle against the dangers that hit Africans particularly hard, including HIV/AIDS. We firmly believe that the prosperity of Africa depends on strong support for its sustainable development.

(spoke in English)

But the freedom from want is closely linked to the freedom from fear. Societies cannot flourish in conditions of violence and intimidation. Too many parts of the continent remain caught in the vicious grip of armed conflict, and the safety of Africans in these situations is fragile. Africa's people pay an especially high price in terms of threats to their personal security. That is why, as we have heard, Africans are working to confront these threats to personal security directly.

On a continent where landmines kill and maim more people than anywhere else, Africans played a leading role in the campaign to ban anti-personnel landmines.

Many of the hundreds of millions of assault rifles and other small arms now in circulation have found their way to African battle zones. The countries of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) have had enough and have imposed a moratorium on the arms flows into their region.

Africa's children are the main victims of the appalling wars that have ravaged Africa. More are drafted into the service of violence as child soldiers than on any other continent. This year, Mozambique gathered Africans and others to take action on this front.

In particular, Africans recognize that the new war economies that marry the brutality of warlords with the avarice of mercenaries and arms dealers and certain commercial interests exert a terrifying hold on many of their communities.

Africans have categorically rejected the assumption of power by force. The decision this year by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) leaders in Algiers is a milestone of enormous importance.

Clearly, Africans themselves have made the security of people an impetus for action. The rest of us should take care to listen and lend support — even if some

around this table do not share this agenda. Equal attention, common action and collective resources to advance Africa's security needs are required. Anything less, especially from the Security Council, is an abdication of our shared obligations.

As we have heard this morning, preventing and resolving conflict are a starting point. Africans are striving to bring conflicts in Africa to an end: the OAU in the Ethiopia-Eritrea conflict, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in Angola and the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Arusha process in Burundi are all very important examples. Peace is being established in Sierra Leone, largely as a result of ECOWAS mediation and years of commitment by its Monitoring Group (ECOMOG).

International support can bolster these efforts and help build local capacity. That is behind Canada's support for Commonwealth efforts in Sierra Leone. At the recently held Moncton Summit, Canada announced a three-year training programme to strengthen peace and security skills in countries of La Francophonie. We are also contributing to strengthening the OAU, especially the conflict management centre, and are committed to working for still closer consultation and cooperation between the United Nations, the OAU and the subregional organizations. We certainly welcome the presence here of Secretary-General Salim Salim and Ministers speaking on behalf of these organizations of Africa.

But making peace is not enough. Keeping, building and consolidating peace are essential. Africans are increasingly called on to serve as peacekeepers. Canadian peacekeepers know first-hand the skill and bravery of their African colleagues. To assist in this area we are helping build on these talents with further training at the Pearson Peacekeeping Centres in Nova Scotia and Montreal.

Where conflict has ended, there is a movement away from a culture of war and towards societies at peace. These efforts need help from other Governments, from civil society and from the business community. Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants are a primary challenge. The plight of war-affected children is a particular concern. Building on Mali's efforts on small arms, for example, Canada and Ghana will host a conference next year to map out an integrated approach to these peace and security concerns in West Africa. Indeed, much of Canada's $30-million peace-building initiative is focused on shoring up these and other efforts with projects responding to local priorities and needs. Last week, my Government announced a further contribution of $4.5 million for Sierra Leone to help civilians, particularly children, who have been deeply affected by that conflict.

Controlling the marketplace of conflict which fuels local African war machines is also vital in order to prevent the suffering of individuals. Encouraging more responsible business and government behaviour is a key. Such efforts by Canada and others in the Wassenaar group to respect the ECOWAS moratorium on arms flows is an important, and I think necessary, demonstration of what must be done.

Business can contribute in other ways. If it wants to harness Africa's economic potential, it must join efforts to remove landmines, which not only kill but also impede access to resources.

I think that it is also very clear that the Security Council has a responsibility to protect the security of individual Africans. Contrary to what some suggest, the Council has the authority and the mandate to take action against those who profit from misery. It has the competence to help establish sustainable peace and to intervene in the face of massive suffering, and it should make full and forceful use that mandate.

More resolute action to cut off the ways and means for waging armed conflict and to ensure that these sanctions work is vital. In Angola this is Canada's objective in proposing tougher measures to reduce UNITA's illegal diamond revenues, to limit its access to the petroleum sources and to curtail its acquisition of arms and ammunition — all of which make it possible for UNITA to pursue this murderous war. I am confident that if the will exists within the Council, these sanctions can be made to encourage UNITA to return to the negotiating table. If successful, the lessons learned here could well have application in other conflict zones.

When there is peace to keep, there is no substitute for collective Council action. This is no less true, and the demand no less urgent, in Africa than elsewhere. We may be faced with the need for robust, comprehensive peace operations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and possibly in Ethiopia and Eritrea. The risks and the costs of these operations must be assumed by us all. Making this solely or even primarily a local responsibility and simply passing around the hat to see what might be dropped into it is as shameful as it is inadequate.

In Sierra Leone, ECOMOG has shouldered the burden long enough. Let us ensure that the mission this Council agrees to implement peace is coloured blue — United Nations-authorized, United Nations-managed, United Nations-funded — and that the United Nations and the remaining ECOMOG forces are as integrated as possible.

The bitter experience of the individual Africans who have suffered most — victims of genocide in Rwanda, widespread starvation in Somalia, pervasive terror in Sierra Leone, a generation-long slaughter in Angola, slave-trading in the Sudan and a senseless war in Ethiopia and Eritrea — should demand effective intervention by the Council. Such is the responsibility of this body and no other.

This humanitarian imperative has been applied, but elsewhere — in Kosovo and in East Timor but not in Africa — raising legitimate concern about how evenly these initiatives are put into practice. The Council needs to establish common criteria to trigger humanitarian intervention, apply them consistently in consultations with regional partners and overcome the reluctance of some to commit their people and resources to help the victims of war in far-off lands.

The security of Africans should be a matter of concern for us all. It is for Canadians. That is why Canada is devoted to African development, the surest way to ensure sustainable peace. That is why Canadians — judges, police, teachers and humanitarian workers — serve in Africa. That is why Canadians were willing to lead a multinational effort in Zaire to protect the safety of a terrorized refugee population and why today we continue to play a part in African peacekeeping operations. Canada is the only remaining non-African contributor to the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic. Prime Minister Chrétien will reaffirm this commitment when he visits Africa later this year.

(*spoke in French*)

As for the Council, much of its time is already absorbed by African issues. The focus needs to be more on both the quality and the effectiveness of the attention it devotes to its African agenda. To this end, an approach to Africa's security challenges that takes human security concerns fully into account makes sense.

(spoke in English)

The Secretary-General has provided us with an insightful progress report on the causes of conflict in Africa. The Secretary-General's comments reinforce the relevance of a human- centred agenda for Africa; his recommendations underline the need for a comprehensive approach. It falls to Africans, Council members and the broader global community to take this agenda forward and secure peace for the people of the African continent.

The President: I thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Canada for the kind words he addressed to the presidency.

Mr. Petrella (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. President, I should like once again to express our gratitude for the tireless efforts deployed by your country and delegation in the Security Council.

I should like to thank the Secretary-General for his report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa. I wish also to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this open debate on this important occasion.

We have listened with great interest to the statement made by Ambassador Salim Ahmed Salim, the Secretary General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), and to that of the Permanent Representative of Algeria, Abdallah Baali, on behalf of the Chairman of the OAU.

The Secretary-General has again shown us the correlation between peace and development, which is essential if we wish to overcome the deep-seated causes of the majority of the conflicts in Africa and elsewhere in the world. The report also underlines the necessary connection between efforts to achieve, maintain and consolidate peace.

In the past two years, the United Nations, the OAU, subregional organizations and various African leaders have undertaken a series of initiatives aimed at resolving the conflicts described in the report. In our view, a comprehensive approach is necessary that would contain the following elements.

First, the role of the Security Council in the maintenance of peace is indispensable, and its authority must be strengthened. In this context, the concept of human security is essential.

Secondly, close cooperation between the Security Council and African regional and subregional organizations is imperative. This cooperation is

particularly relevant with regard to preventive and early-warning mechanisms.

Thirdly, minimum conditions for development must be created in order to overcome the causes of conflict and to deal with their humanitarian consequences. For that reason, we believe that cooperation is imperative between the activities of the Council and of other bodies of the United Nations system, in particular the Bretton Woods institutions.

We must assess and give impetus to the efforts undertaken by the large majority of African countries to consolidate their democracies, promote human rights, reform their economies, attract investments and improve the standard of living of their peoples. The declaration approved last July in Algiers at the OAU Summit is clear evidence of this.

We are witnessing a positive trend in the resolution of conflicts. Complex questions such as those related to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Sierra Leone have taken once again the path of negotiation at the urging of regional leaders and with the support of the Security Council. That support must be renewed with a significant United Nations presence in the field in order to maintain and consolidate the hard-won peace.

In the case of the Central African Republic, we note with satisfaction that on 19 September last, presidential elections were held that international observers found both peaceful and fair. The United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic certainly played a key role in the holding of those elections.

In the Western Sahara, with the cooperation of Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO, the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) continues to work to hold a referendum on self-determination in conditions of freedom, transparency and impartiality.

In the case of Eritrea and Ethiopia, we hope that peace is at hand.

All of these steps towards peace must be supported by the Security Council.

Argentina has participated in and encouraged the process of decolonization in Africa since its inception. Today my country is gratified at the consolidation of the rule of the law and the opening of African economies. To our mutual benefit, we have increased our commercial and technological exchanges and strengthened our political and cultural relations.

At the multilateral level, Argentina, together with interested African countries, promoted the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the South Atlantic. In October 1998, the Fifth Meeting of the Member States of the Zone of Peace and Cooperation of the South Atlantic, held in Buenos Aires, brought together 21 African countries and three Latin America countries.

The Plan of Action adopted at that meeting is designed to implement the objectives of the Zone relating to the peaceful solution of disputes, the promotion of democracy and human rights, the fight against drug trafficking, cooperation for development, humanitarian assistance and the protection of living resources.

Argentina, to the extent of its ability, has been, and will continue to be, present in Africa in the context of peacekeeping operations and in humanitarian assistance efforts, either directly or through the "White Helmets". We are also working on a set of cooperation programmes in the fields of agriculture and livestock, computer science, State reform and privatization, all of which are mutually beneficial. We reiterate our offer to provide training through our Peacekeeping Academy in Buenos Aires.

Finally, I should like to reiterate once again our desire actively to participate in United Nations efforts in Africa and to cooperate fully in the initiatives and recommendations of the Secretary-General.

The President: I thank the representative of Argentina for the kind words he addressed to the presidency.

Mr. Ping (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): Sir, your presence here during this debate on Africa attests to the importance that you personally and your country attach to issues relating to our continent. My delegation appreciates this very much and would like most warmly to congratulate you.

Two years ago the Security Council, meeting in this very Chamber at Foreign Minister level, requested the Secretary-General to submit to it a report on the causes of conflict in Africa, ways to prevent it and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development there. In response to that request, the Secretary-General

submitted to the Security Council on 13 April 1998 a report of very high quality in terms of both the accuracy of its diagnosis and the remedies it proposed.

Having considered the report, the Security Council, within the context of its mandate, developed a series of concrete proposals relating to support for regional and subregional initiatives in the areas of conflict prevention and the maintenance of peace; the establishment of an international mechanism to assist host Governments in maintaining the security and neutrality of refugee camps; the strengthening of Africa's peacekeeping capabilities; the strengthening of the effectiveness of arms sanctions regimes imposed by the Security Council; the urgent resolution of the problem of illicit arms flows; and the enhancement of the Council's ability to monitor activities authorized by it but carried out by Member States or a coalition of States.

With regard to conflict prevention, management and resolution, Africa has endeavoured to equip itself with the appropriate mechanisms at the regional and subregional level. The Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity, Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, who spoke earlier, emphasized the action that has been taken at the continent level in Africa.

In Central Africa, a supreme council on peace and security has been established in addition to the early-warning system and the adoption of a non-aggression pact. Peacekeeping exercises are also planned for the year 2000 in Gabon. All of these initiatives are contributing to a strengthening of confidence-building measures between the States of the subregion. In this connection, I should like to thank the Secretary-General and the Governments of some Member States represented here today for their support.

The favourable response with which the United Nations system and other governmental and non-governmental organizations greeted the report of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa led us to believe that the international community would, in a meaningful way, join in the activities undertaken by Africa to resolve conflicts, consolidate democracy and ensure economic and social development. But with regard to conflict situations in Africa the Security Council is procrastinating, while in other parts of the world it is taking prompt action on a humanitarian basis.

However, peace agreements are in force in various places, and I have high hopes that the United Nations missions being planned to help with the implementation of the Lomé Agreement for Sierra Leone and the Lusaka accords for the Democratic Republic of the Congo will be deployed as soon as possible.

The activities undertaken by Africa demonstrate that it is more than ever determined to combat the crises that are impeding its efforts to ensure the well-being of its peoples. The assistance of the international community is essential if it is to achieve that end.

The President: I thank the Minister of State, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Cooperation and Francophonie of Gabon for the kind words he addressed to my Government.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Like other members of the Security Council, we are pleased to welcome you, Sir, to preside over the Council at this special meeting on Africa — a meeting in which many States Members of the United Nations are participating, including some that are represented at ministerial level. We consider this meeting to be not merely a contribution to resolving the problems of Africa, but a worthy conclusion to the Netherlands presidency of this body during the month of September.

The Security Council is constantly focusing its attention on the problems of Africa, and this is an adequate reflection of the concern of the international community with regard to the situation in the African continent. In the year since the previous meeting of the Security Council on the situation in Africa, developments on that continent continue to be multidimensional and deserving of serious analysis. This was reaffirmed by the statements made by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, by the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and by the representative of Algeria, on behalf of the Chairman of the Organization of African Unity.

We note with satisfaction that, thanks to the peaceful initiatives of interested States and the diplomatic efforts of the United Nations and regional organizations, important, positive changes have taken place in the political settlement of the most serious conflicts, such as those in Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. On the other hand, unfortunately, in spite of the long and intensive months of effort by the international community, in particular the OAU, the prospects for a resolution of the dispute between Ethiopia and Eritrea are not good. We are also greatly concerned about the

smouldering hot bed of war in Angola, where conflict has once again broken out through the fault of UNITA. Particular concern has been expressed about the threat of internal conflicts spilling over into armed inter-State clashes.

We agree with the concerns expressed in the report of the Secretary-General of 25 September 1999 on the progress of the implementation of the recommendations contained in his report of 13 April 1998 on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa. In this connection, we believe that it is important for the provisions of the Charter to be actively implemented in encouraging regional organizations to take a more active initiative in preventive diplomacy and the peaceful settlement of disputes. This would mean strengthening regional peacekeeping operations, with the support of the Security Council; the implementation by regional structures of peacekeeping operations through the use of force is admissible only with the clear sanction of the Security Council, pursuant to Chapter VIII of the Charter. This immutable rule also pertains to the activities of coalition forces formed on an ad hoc basis. Without a durable settlement of conflicts, the countries of Africa will not be able to take the path of sustainable and dynamic growth or eliminate poverty; nor will the full integration of those countries into the world economy be encouraged.

A key role in strengthening peace and security on the continent is rightly to be played by the Organization of African Unity. The efforts of that pan-African forum in preventing and settling conflicts and ensuring sustainable development and prosperity for the entire continent should be greatly appreciated. We believe that the two most recent OAU summits have made a substantial contribution to that end. We would like to emphasize the role of the OAU in resolving serious humanitarian problems and the useful results of its activities in the area of regional integration and in making progress towards African economic unity.

One of the key components in the strategy of strengthening peace in Africa should be the establishment of an effective Africa-wide system geared to the prevention and settlement of conflicts as well as to a comprehensive resolution of the problems involved in the task of post-conflict recovery. The OAU has great potential in this area. In this regard, we also greatly value the activities of such subregional organizations as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Inter-Governmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD).

African efforts must be fully backed by the authority and capabilities of the United Nations. Here we are speaking not of replacing African efforts, but of complementary cooperation and assistance from the United Nations and from other organizations and countries in the establishment of pan-African peacekeeping machinery.

The Russian Federation notes with great satisfaction the growing role played by African States in world affairs, and the contribution of those States to international economic integration and to strengthening the global security system. We welcome the adoption by those countries of reforms intended to strengthen the democratic foundations of political life.

Russia intends to assist in solving the problems of the African continent.

The President: I thank the representative of the Russian Federation for the kind words he addressed to the presidency.

Mr. Hain (United Kingdom): I would like to thank the Netherlands for its initiative in convening this important debate, and also to thank the Secretary-General for his introduction and for his report on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (S/1998/318), in which he set out the benchmarks in this area. His progress report 18 months on (S/1999/1008) makes clear the enormous challenges that we continue to face. Today, his leadership shows the way forward.

As a son of Africa, I am especially delighted to be presenting to the Council our new British Government policy on Africa. I was actually born in Nairobi and brought up in Pretoria. My parents fought for freedom in South Africa, and I carried on fighting for that freedom as a leader of the British anti-apartheid movement after they had been imprisoned and then forced to leave, when we went to London.

Now, after centuries of slavery, economic exploitation and colonial and neo-colonial behaviour that have left Africa the poorer, I am determined to build a new partnership between the African continent of my birth and my adopted homeland of Britain. Certainly, Africans must take responsibility today for endemic corruption, for human rights abuses and for ubiquitous violence, as the representatives of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) said this morning.

But Africa still suffers from international policy neglect. After manipulation by both sides through proxy wars and client States during the cold war, at the end of the cold war both West and East virtually turned their backs. No longer an arena for surrogate battles between the big Powers, Africa was callously sidelined as strategically unimportant. Yet, common humanitarianism aside, the success of Africa is vital to Western interests. That success would create a much safer, more environmentally sustainable world; it would reduce aid budgets and, indeed, the United Nations budget; it would open up new markets; and it would remove havens for the terrorism that will otherwise increasingly threaten the rest of the world.

At the General Assembly last week I was privileged to discuss with senior members of the United States and French Governments the need to put Africa high among the world's policy priorities.

Britain will support African Governments that stand up for democracy and human rights. We will help those Governments that want to reform and modernize their economies. We will support just African solutions to African problems. We will work with those African leaders who commit themselves to freeing their peoples from poverty. And we will work with the people of Africa who are making their continent a better place.

But Britain will not support corrupt Governments. We will not subsidize economic mismanagement. We will not fund repression or bankroll dictatorship. Those evils have failed Africa, and we do not wish to back failure. I want to endorse the vision of President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa: of an African renaissance to help ensure the realization of his identification of the century ahead of us as the Africa century.

The cornerstone of our policy is to work actively and closely with the United Nations as a friend of Africa. We will continue to work within the Security Council to support the resolution of conflicts. Where United Nations action can stop war or build peace, Britain will back it to the hilt. We have done so in Sierra Leone; there, we need to deploy a United Nations peacekeeping force as soon as possible, because the situation remains fragile. I hope that the Council will give rapid backing to the Secretary-General's proposals.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo we need to sustain the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement. We welcome the deployment of United Nations observers to the region, and we look forward to further recommendations from the Secretary-General in due course.

We applaud the success of the United Nations in facilitating peaceful elections in the Central African Republic and in helping to consolidate stability and promote democratization there.

The Council has rightly backed OAU proposals for ending the conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea. It is time for both sides to accept them without further delay or conditions.

We also support Ambassador Fowler's work in the Angola sanctions committee. We must continue to clamp down on the illegal trade in diamonds, and much more needs to be done to address the challenge posed by the war in Angola.

There are other massive challenges facing Africans today. First, Africa has more than half of all war-related deaths worldwide. We have got to prevent wars from starting. That means tackling the root causes of conflict: oppression, injustice and poverty. After cuts under our Conservative predecessors, our Labour Government has increased Britain's aid budget and has also promoted international debt relief. We also fund security reform to improve the quality, supervision, training and democratic accountability of African armies and police forces, which too often have been responsible for arbitrary and brutal exercise of force. For example, we are providing help to reshape Nigeria's military as a bulwark of democracy rather than as an alternative to democracy. We are also helping to track down the billions of dollars stolen from the Nigerian people by the Abacha junta.

Guns are another of Africa's curses. That is why the British Government will not supply defence material where this could start, sustain or stoke internal oppression or external aggression, and why we are backing the West African Moratorium on the Import, Export and Manufacturing of Small Arms. We must stop the illegal trade in diamonds and other precious commodities which pay for the small arms, and all too often the mercenaries, which sustain conflicts.

I want to see the United Nations engaged earlier and more actively in peacekeeping and conflict prevention, as the Secretary-General proposed last week. We will back African regional organizations in their own roles as peacekeepers and peacemakers.

We also need to take action to tackle the problem of AIDS. Every day, around 5,500 Africans die of AIDS. More money has to be found to help. And money can indeed help, as the well funded, well thought-out prevention response in Uganda has shown.

Another challenge is to lift the debt burden which is crushing Africa. We have led the international community in pushing for faster, deeper, wider debt relief. But our support is conditional: debt relief will work only where African Governments are themselves committed to tackling poverty and to implementing the modern economic policies necessary to encourage growth. Where they are, we will back them to the hilt and support them in international financial institutions.

The challenge for Africa is not just to be attractive to traders and foreign investors, but to offer opportunities more attractive than anywhere else in the world. Globalization can be an opportunity rather than a threat. New multinational trade negotiations are due to take place next year; I hope that African countries will actively engage with the World Trade Organization and the key international players and help set the terms of the debate. We will support that.

Clean government means extra foreign investment. Human rights are not just a moral imperative: where they are respected, economies can flourish. Human rights make humans rich. Good governance means good international relations. More reform means more international development aid. With a renaissance based on such principles, and with tangible support from the European Union, the United States and the rest of the industrially advanced world, Africa could have a bright future. Britain will work through the United Nations to help achieve it.

The President: I thank the Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom for the kind words he addressed to the presidency.

The meeting was suspended at 1.20 p.m.